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PATENT
10/22/02

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In Re Application of:

Nicolaides *et al.*

Group Art Unit: 1636

Serial No.: 09/780,675

Confirmation No.: 8276

Filing Date: February 12, 2000

Examiner: B. Loeb

For: METHOD FOR GENERATING
HYPERMUTABLE MICROBES

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Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington D.C. 20231

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

In response to the Official Action dated July 16, 2002, kindly reconsider allowance of the claims in view of the following amendments and remarks. A Version with Markings to Show Changes Made is included.

In the Claims

- sub 4
- C1
1. (Amended) A method for making hypermutable bacteria comprising the steps of:
introducing into a bacterium a polynucleotide encoding a form of a mismatch repair protein under the control of an inducible transcription regulatory sequence; and
inducing said inducible transcription regulatory sequence in said bacterium;
wherein said form of said mismatch repair polynucleotide exerts a dominant negative effect on mismatch repair when expressed in said bacterium, whereby said bacterium becomes hypermutable.
 2. (Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the mismatch repair gene is MutH.